



31 December 2020

Dear students, parents, and carers

I hope that you have all had a safe and enjoyable Christmas and would like to wish you all a very happy New Year.

Following the government announcements yesterday afternoon, I am writing to inform you of the revised arrangements for the start of the Spring Term which are summarised below.

Arrangements for the start of the Spring Term in January

Monday 4 January will be an INSET Day as originally planned.

Tuesday 5 January will be the first day of term for all students as planned. In line with government instructions all students except vulnerable children and the children of key workers will work from home for the first week of term. Students will follow their normal timetable for the week with times of lessons given below:

Lesson One: 08:55-09:55

Lesson Two: 10:00-10:55

Lesson Three: 11:15-12:15

Lesson Four: 13:15-14:15

Lesson Five: 14:15-15:15

Teachers will deliver live lessons using Microsoft Teams from their usual classrooms. These lessons will not be as effective as face to face teaching, but were judged to be more helpful by a clear majority of parents in the Summer Term than just setting online work. For most lessons the teacher will deliver a twenty-minute presentation or interactive session and then set a task for students to complete via epraise for the remainder of the lesson. In most cases the teacher will remain online to answer any questions students have whilst working on the task. Mr Hammond, our Assistant Headteacher, has prepared a guide for students and parents on using Microsoft Teams which is attached to this message. Although we may not be able to resolve technical issues with your computer equipment at home, our IT Support team might be able to assist you. If you have any general questions about online teaching, please contact Mr Hammond (Assistant Headteacher). The email addresses, respectively, are itsupport@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk and peter.hammond@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk. There is also guidance under the Student heading on the school website.

Teachers will be prioritising lessons for Y11 and Y13 as outlined by the government but will endeavour to deliver suitable lessons for all year groups.

Vulnerable children and children of key workers in Years 7-10 and Year 12 will be able to book a place to attend school during the first week of term by emailing Mr Collard, Deputy Headteacher, at the email address andy.collard@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk by 9am on Monday 4 January. Vulnerable students and children of key workers will complete the same online lessons as students at home supported by teaching assistants with regular visits by their Year Leaders.

For the week commencing Monday 11 January Year 11 and Year 13 students will attend lessons in person and will follow their normal timetable. The majority of students in other year groups will work from home. Students in Year 7-Year 10 and Year 12 will continue to have online lessons as detailed above.

Vulnerable children and children of key workers in Years 7-10 and Year 12 will be able to book a place to attend school during the second week of term by emailing Mr Collard, Deputy Headteacher, at the email address andy.collard@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk by 9am on Thursday 7 January. Vulnerable students and children of key workers will complete the same online lessons as students at home supported by teaching assistants with regular visits by their Year Leaders.

All students from all Year Groups will return to school for face to face lessons from Monday 18 January. All of the current arrangements to make the school COVID-19 secure including those listed below will continue for the Spring Term:

- Staff and students wearing masks in communal indoor areas and when moving between lessons
- Staff and students sanitising their hands whenever they arrive at or leave a classroom
- Separate year group zones and enhanced cleaning
- Increased ventilation and encouraging students to wear many layers

Please could we remind all parents to send students into school with a clean reusable mask each day. A small number of students have forgotten to bring these and we have had to give out disposable masks which is less than ideal.

The good news is that at the moment we believe that we will be able to restart after school clubs including those in sport and the arts within year group bubbles from Monday 18 January.

Asymptomatic Testing Programme

We will be working during the first week of term to put in place our programme to enable 'rapid testing to keep schools open'. If you follow the link below you will be able see some details of the proposed programme: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-asymptomatic-testing-in-schools-and-colleges>

My view is that if implemented well, the programme could have important benefits for staff and pupils:

1. Through asymptomatic staff having rapid testing on a weekly basis, it would prevent a member of staff accidentally infecting others.
2. By daily testing of asymptomatic contacts of Year 11 and Sixth Formers who have had a positive test, we would prevent students unnecessarily missing school in a vital term before their exams
3. It could prevent students from other year groups from missing a large amount of school.

We have assembled a team of support staff, who between them are suitably qualified to start to plan how we might implement a testing programme. A number of parents with a nursing background have also kindly come forward and volunteered to help.

I would stress, however, the following:

1. The testing is voluntary and would only take place with parental permission and the consent of the student
2. We will not rush to implement this until we know that we can put safe and humane procedures into place to carry out the testing

We will write to you giving details of how the testing programme at JMHS will work early in the New Year.

Events and key dates for the Spring Term

- Monday 4 January 2021: INSET day – no school for students
- Tuesday 5 January 2021: Term starts with online teaching for all year groups
- Monday 11 January 2021: Year 11 & Year 13 students return to school for in person learning, online teaching continues for all other year groups
- Thursday 14 January 2021: Year 7 Parents' Evening – Virtual
- Monday 18 January 2021: All students in school for in person learning
- Thursday 21 January 2021: Year 8 Choices Evening – Virtual
- Monday 25 January to Friday 5 February 2021: Year 11 Mock Exams
- Thursday 28 January 2021: Year 12 & Year 13 Parents' Evening – Virtual
- Monday 1 February 2021: Staff Training Afternoon – students depart at 12.10/12.25pm
- Thursday 11 February 2021: Year 8 Parents' Evening - Virtual
- Monday 15 February 2021 – Friday 19 February 2021: Half Term
- Monday 22 February – Wednesday 3 March 2021: Year 13 Mock Exams
- Thursday 25 February 2021: Year 10 Parents' Evening - Virtual
- Thursday 4 March 2021: Year 9 Parent' Evening – Virtual
- Tuesday 9 March 2020: Staff Training Afternoon – students depart at 12.10/12.25pm
- Thursday 11 March 2020: Year 11 Parents' Evening – Virtual
- Thursday 1 April 2020: Term ends at 3.15pm

...And finally

I would like to let you know staff will be in school on Monday 4 January to answer any questions students, parents and carers may have and to wish you all a safe, successful and enjoyable 2021.

With my very best wishes



Andrew Evans
Headteacher